

**United States Representative 2 Year Term – Vote for One (1)**

*Candidates were asked to summarize their backgrounds in 75 words and were allotted 75 words to answer each question. If the candidate did not reply by the required date for publication, the words, "Did not respond in time for publication" appear under the candidate's name.*

**QUESTION 1**  
**Are you concerned about the size of the federal deficit? Explain your answer.**

**QUESTION 2**  
**What government measures would you propose to improve access to affordable health care?**

**QUESTION 3**  
**The United States uses a great deal of fossil fuel for power generation and transportation. What measures would you support to tackle the ever increasing need for energy?**

★★★★★ **3rd District** ★★★★★

**Vernon J. Ehlers, Republican**

Ehlers was elected to Congress in December 1993. A former Physics Professor and research physicist, and active in community service, Ehlers served previously in the Michigan House and Senate. Ehlers serves on the Committee on House Administration as Chairman; the Science Committee, where he serves as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Environment, Technology and Standards; the Education and the Workforce Committee; the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress.

Yes, I am extremely concerned about the federal deficit. It is unfair to burden our children and grandchildren with a huge national debt. We need to slow the growth of federal spending and reform our entitlement programs, many of which are outdated and inefficient. We have made very large commitments in Social Security and Medicare, and we must be mindful of these huge impending costs as we consider federal spending in the coming years. ...

I have supported several bills to expand affordable health care. The Medicare Modernization Act provides prescription drug coverage for people with Medicare. Health Savings Accounts allow Americans to contribute to a tax-free account to pay for routine medical needs and to save, tax free, the unspent contributions. Community health centers provide primary health care for the poor without them having to go to the hospital emergency rooms for routine care. In addition, I have voted ...

I have strongly supported the development of alternative and renewable energy resources, and I have promoted efforts to conserve energy, increase energy efficiency and improve fuel economy so that we can decrease our dependence on fossil fuels. This includes tax credits for electricity produced through wind, biomass, geothermal, landfill gas facilities and trash combustion facilities. I also support incentives for hybrid and alternative fuel vehicle purchases and tax credits for home energy efficiency improvements. Nuclear...

**James R. Rinck, Democrat**

After graduating from Calvin College and Illinois Law School, I have been a practicing attorney since 1982. I am currently self-employed. I handle cases involving Social Security, workers compensation and personal injury. In 1993, I was elected to the Grand Rapids Public School Board, where I have served in numerous capacities. I am also a father of two sons and serve as Scoutmaster for their Boy Scout troop.

Our current Administration has created massive deficits, which would be compounded by my opponent's efforts to repeal the Estate Tax, and eliminate billions from tax revenues for the sole benefit of millionaires. Our tax code currently works for corporations instead of everyday citizens. Let's start on this problem by eliminating earmarks. Finally, a huge portion of the deficit is due to our misguided War in Iraq; let's cut costs there.

Massachusetts' plan will be in full effect as July 2007. Just as welfare reform was modeled after an individual state's plan, we may follow Massachusetts' model for health care reform. We must examine how its plan works and modify it for America. We simply cannot continue to have uninsured Americans. The humane and just response is to insure people up front and limit costs and suffering later.

I would support mass transit systems. We have existing rail systems that we should take advantage of, as they are more energy efficient. I also support the development of solar, wind and even safe nuclear energy. We need to place luxury taxes on those who insist on driving vehicles that get less than ten miles per gallon. Reducing our dependence on foreign oil should be a top priority.

**Rodger Gurk, Green**

Rodger Gurk, 58, married 22 years, 4 children, 2 grandchildren. Graduate of Aquinas College. Clinical Social Worker. Born in Niles, Mi. Last 20 years in Grand Rapids. Green Party Candidate for 3rd District Congress.

Yes I am concerned, since 1975 the debt has risen from \$542 billion to \$8 trillion. The money has to come from somewhere to pay this off. Most likely it will be from Social programs that serve the poor, who do not Vote.

Improve access to health care. I support Global Health Care, and will support any legislation already in place, and if elected I will write legislation to start the Global Health Care movement.

Energy. I support alternative energy sources that are eco friendly. I would like to see more wind energy, and ethanol as long as the farmers don't grow so much corn they knock the market out from under themselves. We may have to look at different construction in housing, and public transport.

**Jeff A. Steinport, Libertarian**

Jeff Steinport is a regional technology director in Grand Rapids for Advantage Sales and Marketing, a nationwide food broker and marketing agency. Jeff has his bachelor's degree in business administration from Ferris State University. Jeff was a member of the Grand Rapids Board of Education from 2001 to 2004, and served as the board's treasurer, as well as on several committees.

Yes. Every year, more debt is added to the burden of trillions of dollars that the American people are responsible for. Not only that, but unfunded future liabilities will cause the deficit and national debt to balloon into the tens of trillions of dollars if nothing is done to correct the situation. Our nation's financial and economic health is at risk because of the reckless spending habits of the congress and president.

Health care must be subject to the same market forces that keep prices low for other essentials. We wouldn't dream of having the government run farms, housing construction firms, or car manufacturers, but today the government's regulation and isolation of health care from the market causes prices to be artificially high. Medical savings accounts must be expanded and Americans encouraged to be good consumers so that health care costs are scrutinized and competition is injected.

Market forces are very powerful in regulating the cost and consumption of commodity items, such as fossil fuels. As prices go up, the feasibility of alternate fuels and technologies increases. In addition, the profits that oil companies make during boom times finance the exploration and innovation required to explore other methods of crude oil extraction. I also support allowing more clean and safe oil drilling in America and in America's ocean waters.

